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County Employment and Wages in Minnesota — Third Quarter 2016

Employment increased in all eight of the large counties in Minnesota from September 2015 to September 2016, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with 2015 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Hennepin County had the largest increase, up 2.4 percent, followed by Dakota (1.8 percent) and Washington (1.5 percent). Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Charlene Peiffer noted that the rates of job growth in Hennepin and Dakota Counties were above the national increase of 1.7 percent. (See [table 1.](#))

Among the eight largest counties in Minnesota, employment was highest in Hennepin (912,200) in September 2016, followed by Ramsey (331,100). Two other counties—Dakota and Anoka—each had employment levels of more than 100,000. Collectively, Minnesota's eight large counties accounted for 67.2 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties made up 72.5 percent of total U.S. employment.

The average weekly wage in Ramsey County rose 8.9 percent from the third quarter of 2015 to the third quarter of 2016, the largest increase among Minnesota's large counties. Hennepin County had the highest average weekly wage in the state at \$1,277, followed by Ramsey (\$1,162) and Olmsted (\$1,151). (See [table 1.](#)) Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 5.4 percent over the year to \$1,027 in the third quarter of 2016.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 79 counties in Minnesota with employment below 75,000. All of these smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average. (See [table 2.](#))

Large county wage changes

All of the eight large counties in Minnesota had wage increases from the third quarter of 2015 to the third quarter of 2016. Five of these counties had wage increases that were greater than the national increase of 5.4 percent. (See [table 1.](#)) Ramsey County's 8.9-percent wage gain ranked 16th among the 344 largest U.S. counties. Two other large counties ranked among the top 100 nationwide for wage growth: Stearns (7.3 percent, 47th) and Washington (6.5 percent, 90th).

Nationally, 339 of the 344 largest counties registered over-the-year wage increases. Clark, Nev., had the largest wage gain, up 12.2 percent from the third quarter of 2015. Manatee, Fla., was second with a wage increase of 10.7 percent, followed by Hillsborough, N.H. (10.4 percent); and Boone, Ky., and Elkhart, Ind. (10.3 percent each).

Among the largest U.S. counties, five experienced over-the-year wage decreases. Rockland, N.Y., had the largest wage decrease with a loss of 14.9 percent. Lafayette, La., had the second largest decrease in average weekly wages, down 3.4 percent from the third quarter 2015, followed by Benton, Ark. (-2.0 percent); Lake, Ill. (-0.9 percent); and Midland, Texas (-0.3 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in three of Minnesota's eight large counties were above the national average of \$1,027 in the third quarter of 2016. As noted, Hennepin County (\$1,277) had the highest average weekly wage in the state, ranking 22nd among the 344 largest U.S. counties. Ramsey (\$1,162) and Olmsted (\$1,151) placed 46th and 52nd, respectively. Washington (\$870) reported the lowest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties and ranked 248th nationwide.

Nationwide, average weekly wages were at or above the U.S. average (\$1,027) in 103 of the 344 largest counties in the third quarter of 2016. Santa Clara, Calif., recorded the highest average weekly wage at \$2,260, followed by San Mateo, Calif. (\$2,098); San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,892); New York, N.Y. (\$1,879); and Washington, D.C. (\$1,728).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 241 had weekly wages below the national average in the third quarter of 2016. Horry County, S.C. (\$632) reported the lowest wage, followed by Cameron, Texas (\$636); Hidalgo, Texas (\$654); and Webb, Texas (\$680).

Average weekly wages in Minnesota's smaller counties

Among the 79 smaller counties in the state (those with employment below 75,000), Carver County had the highest average weekly wage at \$999, followed by Scott County at \$942. Cass County had the lowest weekly wage among the smaller counties at \$577. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 87 counties in Minnesota were considered, 6 reported average weekly wages of \$649 or lower, 36 had wages from \$650 to \$749, 29 reported wages from \$750 to \$849, and 16 had wages of \$850 or higher. (See [chart 1](#).)

Additional statistics and other information

Quarterly data for states have been included in this release in [table 3](#). For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the [Technical Note](#) or visit the QCEW Web site at www.bls.gov/cew.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2015 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2016 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2015* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn15.htm. The 2016 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2017.

The County Employment and Wages release for fourth quarter 2016 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 7, 2017.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.8 million employer reports cover 142.9 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. 13, the number of weeks in a quarter, then divide the result. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 8 largest counties in Minnesota, third quarter 2016

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	September 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2015-16 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, third quarter 2015-16 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	142,940.5	1.7	--	\$1,027	--	5.4	--
Minnesota	2,849.5	1.6	--	1,053	13	6.4	11
Anoka, Minn.	121.0	0.7	265	1,027	103	6.2	117
Dakota, Minn.	188.0	1.8	164	991	133	5.2	205
Hennepin, Minn.	912.2	2.4	112	1,277	22	6.2	117
Olmsted, Minn.	96.2	1.2	226	1,151	52	3.7	296
Ramsey, Minn.	331.1	0.8	257	1,162	46	8.9	16
St. Louis, Minn.	98.2	0.1	305	874	245	4.9	226
Stearns, Minn.	85.7	0.6	273	884	232	7.3	47
Washington, Minn.	82.3	1.5	195	870	248	6.5	90

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(3) Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Minnesota, third quarter 2016

Area	Employment September 2016	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	142,940,452	\$1,027
Minnesota	2,849,452	1,053
Aitkin	3,984	681
Anoka	121,019	1,027
Becker	14,107	727
Beltrami	19,612	800
Benton	17,481	788
Big Stone	1,852	729
Blue Earth	38,966	824
Brown	14,514	795
Carlton	13,635	830
Carver	37,620	999
Cass	11,246	577
Chippewa	5,789	711
Chisago	15,515	844
Clay	18,780	745
Clearwater	2,863	788
Cook	3,178	589
Cottonwood	4,326	716
Crow Wing	30,055	741
Dakota	188,020	991
Dodge	5,884	864
Douglas	18,602	789
Faribault	4,813	744
Fillmore	6,164	640
Freeborn	12,132	779
Goodhue	21,609	879
Grant	1,867	730
Hennepin	912,218	1,277
Houston	5,169	624
Hubbard	6,386	716
Isanti	10,800	770
Itasca	15,701	800
Jackson	5,416	693
Kanabec	3,924	738
Kandiyohi	23,717	738
Kittson	1,415	709
Koochiching	4,658	761
Lac qui Parle	2,200	640
Lake	4,172	803
Lake of the Woods	1,545	683
Le Sueur	9,636	808
Lincoln	1,721	667
Lyon	14,804	795
McLeod	16,604	849
Mahnomen	1,996	679
Marshall	2,222	775
Martin	8,659	810
Meeker	7,311	699
Mille Lacs	9,351	697
Morrison	11,036	695
Mower	16,646	870
Murray	2,940	679
Nicollet	14,956	826
Nobles	10,334	809
Norman	1,682	675

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Minnesota, third quarter 2016 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2016	Average weekly wage(1)
Olmsted	96,233	1,151
Otter Tail	23,202	731
Pennington	10,643	834
Pine	8,432	608
Pipestone	4,438	693
Polk	12,424	743
Pope	4,300	824
Ramsey	331,089	1,162
Red Lake	1,032	672
Redwood	6,664	695
Renville	5,658	749
Rice	25,089	868
Rock	3,583	660
Roseau	8,094	759
St. Louis	98,243	874
Scott	50,871	942
Sherburne	26,106	839
Sibley	4,852	753
Stearns	85,672	884
Steele	22,126	795
Stevens	5,537	856
Swift	3,599	715
Todd	6,041	720
Traverse	1,089	660
Wabasha	6,957	698
Wadena	5,884	736
Waseca	6,709	780
Washington	82,318	870
Watsonwan	4,209	680
Wilkin	2,049	857
Winona	25,115	776
Wright	42,980	801
Yellow Medicine	3,943	716

Footnotes(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

NOTE: Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.
Data are preliminary.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, third quarter 2016

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	September 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2015-16	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2015-16	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	142,940.5	1.7	\$1,027	--	5.4	--
Alabama	1,923.8	1.5	870	36	4.9	38
Alaska	337.4	-2.6	1,055	12	1.2	49
Arizona	2,695.5	3.1	950	24	6.9	5
Arkansas	1,205.4	1.0	794	48	5.2	32
California	16,871.1	2.4	1,210	4	6.7	8
Colorado	2,576.5	2.6	1,062	10	5.6	23
Connecticut	1,674.2	0.3	1,204	5	5.0	34
Delaware	440.7	0.8	1,022	16	5.6	23
District of Columbia	759.2	1.7	1,728	1	3.8	45
Florida	8,320.2	3.7	905	29	6.2	14
Georgia	4,290.4	2.9	969	21	5.9	18
Hawaii	648.4	1.8	956	23	6.7	8
Idaho	703.7	3.5	782	50	6.3	12
Illinois	5,933.6	0.6	1,062	10	4.4	40
Indiana	3,025.9	1.8	866	37	5.9	18
Iowa	1,548.6	0.8	873	35	6.2	14
Kansas	1,377.2	0.5	857	39	5.9	18
Kentucky	1,880.2	1.5	857	39	6.5	10
Louisiana	1,908.8	-0.9	883	32	2.9	48
Maine	616.2	0.9	825	45	5.9	18
Maryland	2,648.1	1.4	1,124	8	5.3	30
Massachusetts	3,522.9	2.0	1,277	2	6.8	7
Michigan	4,292.2	2.1	976	19	5.9	18
Minnesota	2,849.5	1.6	1,053	13	6.4	11
Mississippi	1,126.9	0.7	739	51	4.7	39
Missouri	2,782.1	1.6	888	30	5.0	34
Montana	464.5	1.5	792	49	4.3	41
Nebraska	973.9	0.9	857	39	5.5	26
Nevada	1,300.7	3.8	949	25	10.1	1
New Hampshire	655.0	1.8	1,027	15	7.9	2
New Jersey	4,000.0	1.8	1,173	7	5.0	34
New Mexico	811.5	0.2	830	44	4.0	43
New York	9,216.6	1.6	1,222	3	3.5	46
North Carolina	4,290.3	2.3	909	28	5.3	30
North Dakota	423.2	-3.4	964	22	0.7	50
Ohio	5,347.3	1.1	924	26	5.4	27
Oklahoma	1,578.7	-1.3	854	42	3.5	46
Oregon	1,866.5	2.6	970	20	5.2	32
Pennsylvania	5,776.7	1.0	1,013	17	5.4	27
Rhode Island	481.1	0.8	990	18	7.6	3
South Carolina	2,008.6	2.5	832	43	5.6	23
South Dakota	424.2	1.1	809	47	7.0	4
Tennessee	2,918.8	2.5	912	27	5.4	27
Texas	11,830.7	1.3	1,042	14	4.3	41
Utah	1,407.4	3.8	881	33	6.3	12
Vermont	309.9	0.5	880	34	6.2	14
Virginia	3,801.0	1.0	1,063	9	5.0	34
Washington	3,278.9	3.0	1,188	6	6.9	5
West Virginia	691.5	-1.6	816	46	3.9	44
Wisconsin	2,850.1	1.0	885	31	6.2	14
Wyoming	274.8	-4.7	865	38	0.0	51
Puerto Rico	888.2	-0.4	524	(3)	2.3	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, third quarter 2016 - Continued

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	September 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2015-16	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2015-16	National ranking by percent change
Virgin Islands	37.4	1.4	778	(3)	5.9	(3)

Footnotes:

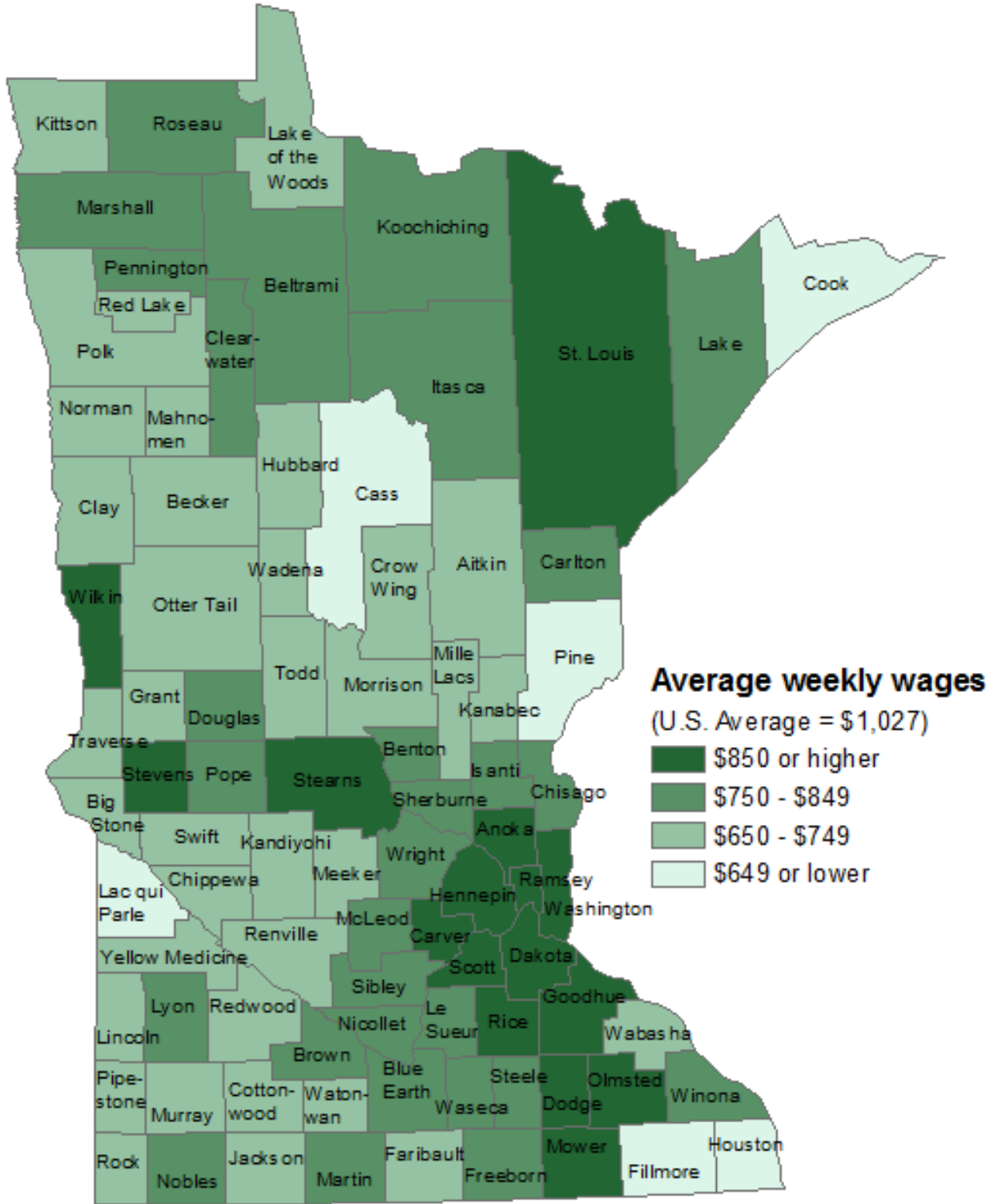
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(3) Data not included in the national ranking.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Minnesota, third quarter 2016



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.